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ILLEGAL ISRAELI ACTIONS IN OCCUPIED EAST JERUSALEM AND THE REST OF THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 3 July 1997 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to document A/ES-10/6-S/1997/494 and to transmit to you herewith Syria's reply to the points made in section II of the document.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, entitled "Illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory", and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Farouk AL-ATTAR
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Minister Counsellor

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Annex

With regard to the letter from the representative of Israel referred to in the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution ES-10/2, of 25 April 1997, issued on 26 June 1997 as document A/ES-10/6-S/1997/494, I wish to inform you of the following:

1. The representative of Israel is once again seeking to deflect attention from the atrocities and massacres that his country continues to commit against the Arab population living under Israeli occupation in Palestine, the Golan, southern Lebanon and western Bekaa.

2. Israel is seeking to evade all responsibility with respect to the serious deterioration in the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem. This situation is attributable to its settlement policy, particularly the construction of a new settlement in Jebel Abu Ghneim, a measure that is null and void, lacks any legal basis, and is an obstacle to peace, as indicated by the General Assembly in the resolution it adopted at its emergency special session.

3. Israel rejects the principles of the peace process laid down in Madrid and is thus flouting the views of the international community and jeopardizing any possibility of establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

4. We wish to emphasize that the Syrian Arab Republic condemns all acts and all forms of terrorism, which it regards as criminal acts against innocent people and their property, and as a violation of the sovereignty and security of States. Syria is therefore in favour of all countries cooperating genuinely under international law and taking the necessary measures to combat terrorism and eliminate its causes. Syria also considers it desirable to establish internationally acceptable criteria drawing a clear distinction between terrorism, which is to be condemned and combated, and struggles against occupation, which are to be defended and supported.

The Syrian Arab Republic was one of the first countries to call for an international conference to define terrorism and study its causes, to avoid any confusion between terrorism and liberation struggles and to study the causes of acts of violence that can lead to human rights violations, misery, frustration, injustice and despair.

In its resolutions on measures to eliminate international terrorism, the General Assembly clearly indicated that the provisions of those resolutions did not in any way call into question the right to self-determination, the right to freedom and the right to independence - which are laid down in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and which are denied to peoples living under occupation, under racist regimes and under any form of alien domination - any more than they called into question the legitimate right of such peoples to receive assistance and to fight to regain such rights, in accordance with the

principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the above-mentioned Declaration and the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

The only form of terrorism that is to be condemned is State terrorism, which Israel practises against the Arab population in Palestine and in the occupied Arab territories. Israel has committed countless criminal acts of terrorism, the most recent being the Qana massacre, with a view to achieving its expansionist goals, consolidating its hegemony and terrorizing the Arab population so that it leaves its land and makes way for the settlers. Israel is seeking to pass State terrorism off as acts of self-defence, whereas the whole world regards State terrorism as the most abhorrent and most serious form of terrorism.